

Luton miss glory by 11 minutes

By ALAN MANLEY: Luton0, Sunderland3

AT first sight this score suggests a First Division team competently disposing of a struggling side 44 places below them. To put it in correct perspective I report:

Sunderland were mightily flattered by their three-goal margin. One goal, or even a replay, would have been fairer.

Luton fought with honour and courage, and for 79 minutes were more than equal of the men from Roker.

In Sunderland's favour, it must be said that the two greatest levellers in Soccer are Cup atmosphere and mud. Both were at Kenilworth-road in great quantity.

In the end, after an exciting, enthralling struggle, Luton were conquered, yet until that fateful 79th minute when Sharkey scored a somewhat lucky goal to give wilting Sunderland a fillip, it was, to use the old, old cliché, impossible to tell which team came from which division.

For instance: Luton forced ten corners, Sunderland only two, and McLaughlan was the busier goal-keeper. The other undeniable facts, of course, are that Mulhall scored a brilliant second goal after 85 minutes and Sharkey the third two minutes later. And that is all that really matters.

All goals followed excellent wing play, and it was at full-back that Luton were weakest. Mulhall was the game's best forward, Sharkey the top opportunist, yet both were equalled by Luton's Pacey and Caleb, the outstanding defenders.

FAIR PLAY: Luton 80%, Sunderland 65%.

Luton.—Baynham: McBain, Barton, Pacey, Caleb, Reid; Pleat, Riddick, McKechie, Riech, Jardine.

Sunderland.—McLaughlan; Parke, Ashurst; Harvey, Rooks, McNab; Usher, Mitchinson, Sharkey, Herd, Mulhall.